

The St. James'

Parishioner

LENT 2011

St. James' Anglican Church 6 Hamilton Street Stratford N5A 7P4 www.stjamesstratford.ca

From the Rector's Desk...

Sunrise or Sunset? & The Interpretation of Scripture

By The Rev'd Canon Dr. Lorne Mitchell

As some people know, I have developed a keen interest in photography over the years. I'm really not very good at it but I keep learning and I get great pleasure out of it. It's such a thrill to capture a beautiful fleeting moment in time... one that otherwise might not easily be noticed.

An example is this picture I took last summer. The interaction of the clouds, sky and sun was magical. But an interesting thing happened that got me thinking. When I showed the photo to a friend, he commented on the richness of the colours and then asked, "Was it at sunrise or sunset?" Interesting!!! In the picture, just as it is, there is really no clue to tell you if this is the end of a day or the beginning of a new one. A person looking at this photo needs a little more information to discern between these two interpretations.



Of course this is all pretty obvious. However, what I would like to point out is that this is also a parable about the interpretation of scripture. Most verses of the Bible do not stand well all on their own. The fullness of meaning cannot easily be discerned without reference to other passages in the Bible. Each story, each law, each word, each metaphor of scripture exists within a particular history, tradition and language. The full power, beauty and wisdom handed to us can best be experienced by looking at the wider context of a given piece of scripture.

For example, on the large chancel arch in St. James' in plain sight for all to see is the familiar verse from the gospel of John where Jesus says: "I have come that you may have life, and have it abundantly." For me, this is an incredibly powerful passage of scripture. Nevertheless, I am also aware that its meaning is not totally obvious to the average person on the street. For some very consumer oriented business manager, it could easily be a banner that is hung over the entrance of a new discount department store! "We have come so that you may have life and have it abundantly!"

The Biblical Context

The full power of this verse of scripture only starts to really engage us when we know the wider biblical context. For example:

- 1) In Genesis, there is the story of God making a covenant with Abraham: “You will be my people and I will be your God”.
- 2) In Exodus, there is the story of God sending the Hebrew people Moses; he comes to lead the people out of a land of slavery and death.
- 3) There is the story of Moses coming to the people with the Ten Commandments as a guide for living their lives; God said that following these laws mean life for you and not following them means death – so choose life.
- 4) At several different times in scripture, prophets refer to a deep need for a saviour; one that will restore right relationships among all people; a wonderful counselor, a prince of peace.
- 5) There is the story of how at the beginning of his ministry, Jesus stood in the synagogue in his home town and said, “Today, these scriptures have been fulfilled in your hearing.”
- 6) And finally, there is even the future context; the events of his suffering and crucifixion; His desire to bring the message of love even if it means his own death.

Jesus grew up surrounded by these stories and traditions. All of this larger context is what brings fullness of meaning to the words:

“I have come that you may have life, and have it abundantly”

The Context of the Picture

On the day of the picture, I got up early, just as light was beginning to creep into the sky. I noticed that unlike the day before, the sky was not overcast, so I took my tripod and camera down to the Dyers Bay beach. I aimed the camera east looking over Georgian Bay and waited for the sunrise.

*People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.*

Restore & Re-purpose: The Capital Campaign Takes Shape

Quietly and steadily, with increasing energy, the major capital campaign for St. James is beginning to take shape. As it does, it has become perfectly clear that this is no ordinary “let’s fix the roof” campaign. This is the kind of exciting work that will have a real impact on the whole Stratford community for years to come. The Intent of this work is to restore and re-purpose for the next generation.

Restore

The first goal is to restore the parts of the church buildings that need attention. A professional assessment of the buildings identified several areas that need work over the next five years. This includes the Church nave roof, the Bell Tower masonry, the Chapel roof and walls, the stained glass windows, and the foundations and floor joists. This is only a partial list but it gives you an idea of the size and scope of the task before us.

Re-Purpose

The second goal is to re-purpose parts of the church that need significant upgrades. This will certainly include upgrades to the kitchen, washrooms and the Parish Hall. It will also include addressing issues of accessibility. Tackling this second goal will mean that our space is flexible and usable by both the parish and the wider community for a wide range of gatherings and events.

The Wardens have spent many hours reviewing what is required and how it can be scheduled over a number of years.

The Wardens concluded that we needed \$2,000,000 to carry out this essential work and at its January meeting Vestry approved the motion that we undertake a Campaign to raise the \$2,000,000. As the work will be phased over the next five years, the Campaign Committee will be seeking pledges from both parishioners and people of the community for contributions spread over five years.

As we move into March, the various sub-committees are beginning to lay the ground work for a successful campaign. Guided by the Strategic Plan, the Building Restoration committee is creating a schedule of the work that is to be done over the next few years. The Arts and Letters sub-committee is preparing and producing the necessary campaign material. The Special Events sub-committee is preparing for a wonderful public launch of the campaign on Sunday September 11th. The Bishop of Huron, the Rt. Rev'd Bob Bennett will join us that day. At that time, an every member canvass will take place and should be complete by Christmas. Throughout the Fall we will be having various social and musical events that will be of interest to the whole Stratford community.

The end result of this work will be beautiful, historic spaces, for the people of Stratford to use and appreciate. Whether it be worship, education, community outreach, social gatherings, or music and the arts, St. James will be ready to serve the needs of the next generation in this city.

As our plans continue to develop we shall keep you informed!

David Rose
Chair of the Capital Campaign Committee

The Sale's On!

The Sale Committee is revving up, and we're getting ready for the Annual April Event. An essential for making this sale a big success is lots of clean, sorted "stuff" to sell, and with Larry away on holidays we'd prefer if it was delivered the week of April 4th. HOWEVER, if you have some "stuff" and can't stash it till that week, give one of the coordinators a call: Mary Bockus, 273-7613; Cathy de Brabandere, 273-0065; Louise McColl, 271-6942; or Lori Colbeck, 271-1142.



Building Our Future

Construction is underway! An initial meeting of the team charged with implementing our strategic plan, "Building our Future," was held in February following the annual Vestry meeting at which Vestry voted unanimously to adopt the plan. A number of members of the original planning committee have volunteered to continue with the implementation. At this meeting Dianne McCabe was elected Chair of the St. James' Strategy Committee for a two year term.

The terms of reference for the committee were approved by Parish Council in January. Those terms include responsibilities for communicating progress to the Vestry and soliciting input, assisting staff and laity to integrate the activities of ministry with the missions of the plan, preparing an annual time line of action steps for Council, preparing recommendations for Council for action steps in 2011, 2012, 2013, providing progress reports to the parish, overseeing the review of the parish organizational structure, and recruiting members for the committee and the communications and membership committees.

Also invited to the February meeting were those interested in, or currently involved in, communications activities and membership. A main agenda item was a brainstorming session on how we can advance communications and membership work given that we have no chairs for these committees. We will be using a "segmentation" model, where individuals are willing to take on a component of the the ministry. In the communications field we have a web master, an editor for our newsletter and an individual interested in coordinating a team of telephoners. For membership we have volunteers for new member welcome and some other volunteers willing to help out. We noted that the telephone tree will intersect both membership and communications, and thus a close working relationship between these two ministries will be important. For the time being, Canon Lorne+ and Verger Jane will coordinate communications and membership, with thanks to those who have stepped forward to assist. Please

don't hesitate to contact one of us if you would like to become involved in revitalizing communications and membership ministry at St. James. And thank you to former staff and wardens who shared their experience and advice with us.

Notices of meetings will be posted in the bulletin; everyone is welcome to attend.

Jane Kirkpatrick, Verger

LENT 2011

The word "Lent" means "spring" and, as the name suggests, it is a growing season. We are encouraged to use this Church season as a time of personal spiritual growth. Consider the following opportunities.....

Tuesdays

5 Tuesdays beginning March 15th

Celtic Eucharist @ 7:00 pm followed by a study of **TAKE THIS BREAD** by American journalist Sara Miles. This is a book about food, about eating and being fed, written by a woman who had no interest in religion or faith, until one day she walked into an Anglican church and was given a piece of bread, the Body of Christ. A provocative, challenging and energizing read.

Led by the Rev'd Canon Lorne+

Wednesdays

6 Wednesdays beginning Ash Wednesday

Regular Wednesday Eucharist at 10:00 am followed by **Bible Study** 10:30-11:30 am in the Club Room. A reflection on Lenten themes through the lens of the Sunday Gospel readings.

Led by Rev'd Lynn+

Thursdays

5 Thursdays beginning March 11th

Walking the Labyrinth

A labyrinth will be set up in the Church School area 6:00 - 8:00 pm. An opportunity for quiet reflection and meditation in the midst of a busy week.

Continuing opportunities are:

Muffins & Meditation

Saturday mornings at 9:30

Brown Bag with Benedict

Wednesdays at noon

Christian Meditation Group

Wednesdays at 4:30 pm

Choral Evensong

Sunday, April 3rd at 4:00 pm.

Looking ahead.....

Good Friday Stations of the Cross

for Children and their Parents

Good Friday April 22 9:30-10:30 am

Hospitality Committee Report

The "Hospitality Committee" has had great fun preparing for this year's Mardi Gras Pancake Party celebration.

Of course it would be quite impossible for this group to be "hospitable" if there were not willing and generous members of the parish family who say "yes" when asked to help with the set-up, decorating, cooking, and cleaning. Therefore, although there is a committee, it is the working together that makes these events such a success and pleasure.

Our next adventure will be the Parish Picnic and we will keep you well informed of plans for that special and happy event as they come together.

Lori Colbeck
Shirley Jeffrey

Enquiring Minds Want to Know....

....answers to more questions from the Parish Survey.

In our last issue of the Parishioner, I started responding to some of the questions that were posed through the parish survey conducted in the fall of 2009. So here are some more Q & A.

Was there vestry approval for the chancel renovations and the hiring of the youth ministry coordinator?

Yes. The plans for moving the organ console and extending the nave were presented to a special Vestry meeting held in June 2006. The renovations and the money to hire a youth ministry coordinator were financed through a bequest from Harry Yeandle.

What happened to Newcomers Sunday?

Unfortunately, the Membership Committee was unable to carry on with this due to a number of staff changes within the parish that were out of their control. However, look to see this fine tradition revived this year.

Why do we have to have the service printed out every week when we have perfectly fine prayer books in the pews?

The decision to print the order of service weekly began with our move to the upper parish hall during the 2006 renovations. The clergy have carried on with printing the 10:30 service for two main reasons:

1) The BAS is not intended to be used like the BCP. It is a book of resources that provides opportunities through the seasons to vary the liturgy far more than the BCP. Printing the service also allows for the incorporation of different liturgies as allowed and encouraged by the Anglican Church of Canada (such as Lutheran prayers we used during Advent & Iona liturgies we have used during Lent)

2) Those who write about welcoming newcomers and young families stress how important an easy-to-follow order of service can be. See the article in the Feb. 2011 Anglican Journal p.11. Our newcomer music director has remarked that ours is the most user friendly worship bulletin she has ever seen.

What happened to the development of cells?

Informally there are cells operating within the parish (ie. Meditation group, craft group, gardening group, choir). However development of an official program for this ministry requires resources of time and people and we so far haven't been able to muster those. Interestingly, Christian Jubilee church has 22 cells within that congregation.

If you have a question about the parish and how it operates, please do let me know. Often it will be of interest to many.

Jane Kirkpatrick, Verger

Temperance

Certificates like these were presented to Presbyterian Sunday School students when they satisfactorily completed the National Temperance Study Course examination. For approximately eight Sunday afternoons during the winter, the Sunday School superintendent would "preach" a temperance sermon to us who were in either the junior or senior class. Following that, we would read a particular article in our weekly Sunday School newspaper trying to digest every pertinent detail. Each Monday after school, we walked to the superintendent's home where we wrote that week's test. When the final examination results were ready for publication, a lady from the Canadian Woman's Temperance Union, and/or a high-ranking official from the Presbyterian Church in Canada would present each successful student with his/her coveted Temperance Certificate in front of the whole congregation! What an honour for ten-year-olds!

Probably, I should also add that during the thirties and forties my home town, Listowel, was "dry." Legally there was no alcohol sold there. Thirsty people were known to make frequent trips to "wet" Palmerston. In fact, a customer could even place an order with the dependable, local taxi driver who would drive to Palmerston, and deliver the purchases right to one's home! How times have changed! Can you imagine our Friday night family dinner without a sip of wine?

Submitted by Marie Jones

